



Center for Public Health
Systems Science

Brown School

Tobacco 21 evaluation

Tobacco retailers share opinions on local policy in Cincinnati, Ohio

Veronica L. Chaitan | June 30, 2022

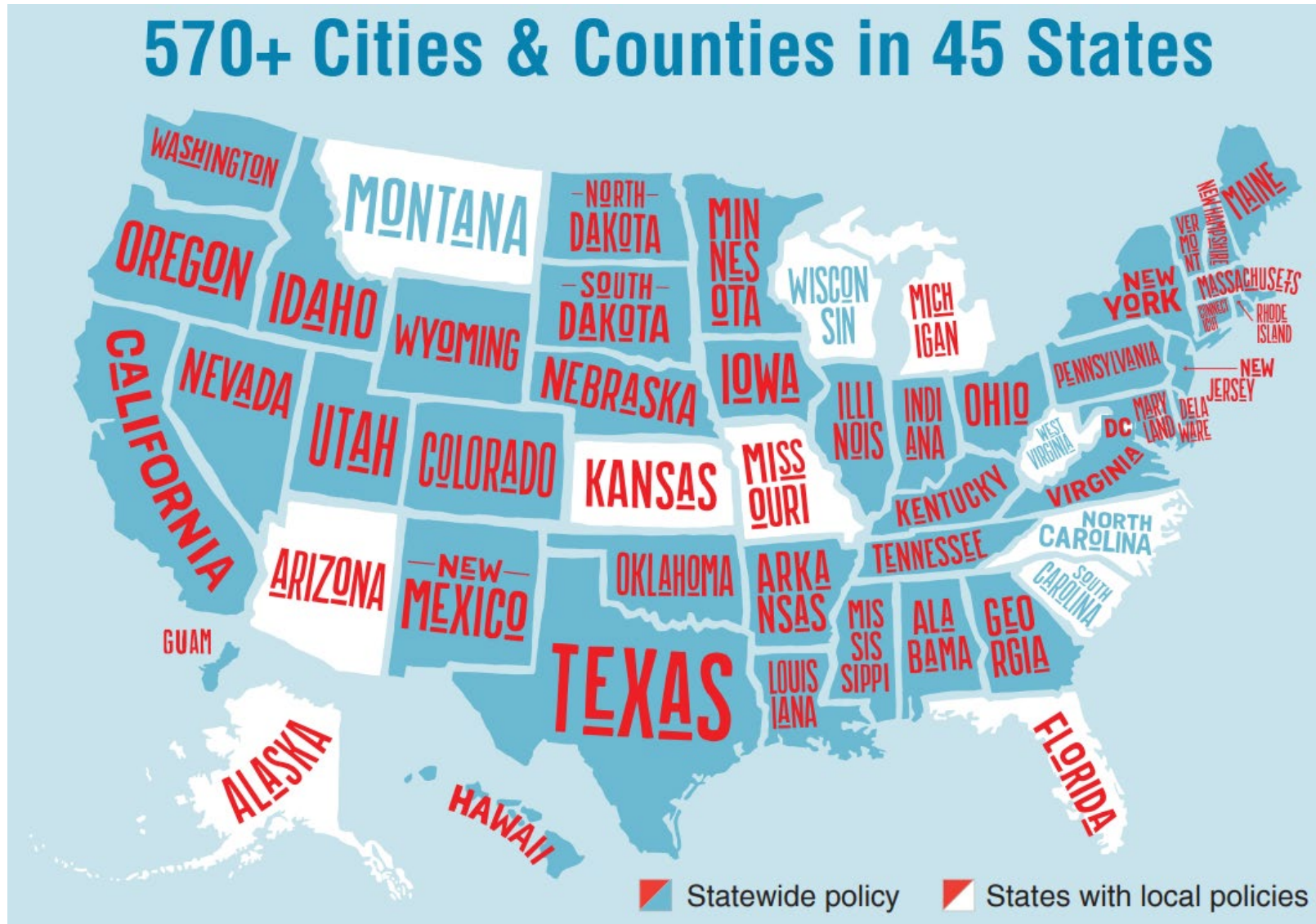
Background



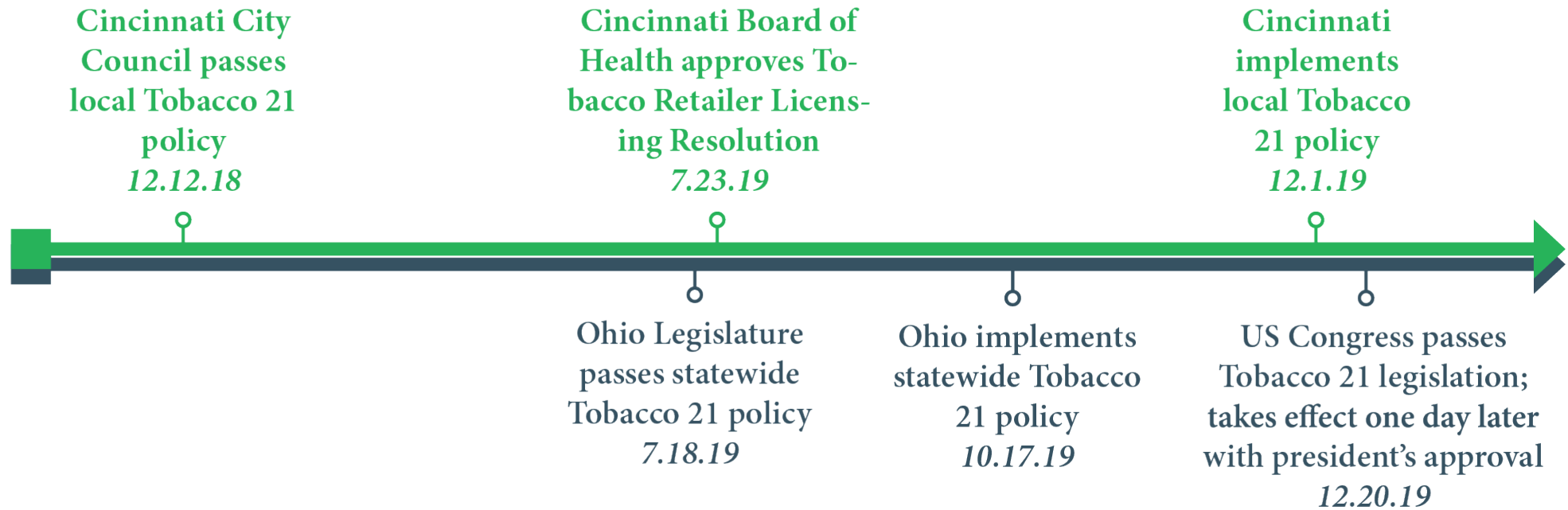
Why Tobacco 21 for Cincinnati?



Tobacco 21 policy landscape



Cincinnati Tobacco 21 milestones



Tobacco 21 Evaluation



External evaluators with local collaboration and support



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**EVALUATION
TEAM**

**INTERACT
FOR HEALTH**

A Catalyst for Health and Wellness

city of
CINCINNATI
HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Mixed-methods evaluation design, engaging with tobacco retailers

Macro State and National Policy Environment

Environmental scan
Literature review
Key informant interviews



Mezzo City, Neighborhoods, Communities

Key informant interviews
Retailer interviews
Retailer surveys
License and signage inspections



Micro Individuals

Key informant interviews
Retailer interviews
Retailer surveys
Youth and young adult surveys



Three waves of retailer surveys

- Retailers invited after license approval
- \$25 gift card incentives
- Three waves
 - Wave I, 2019-2020: November 15, 2019 – October 14, 2020
 - Wave II, 2020-2021: October 15, 2020 – October 14, 2021
 - Wave III, 2021-2022: October 15, 2021 – June 23, 2022



One round of retailer interviews

- Evaluation Year 3
- 20-30 minutes via phone/Zoom
- \$50 gift card incentives
- January – April 2022



Results



Average 60 retailers across the three survey waves



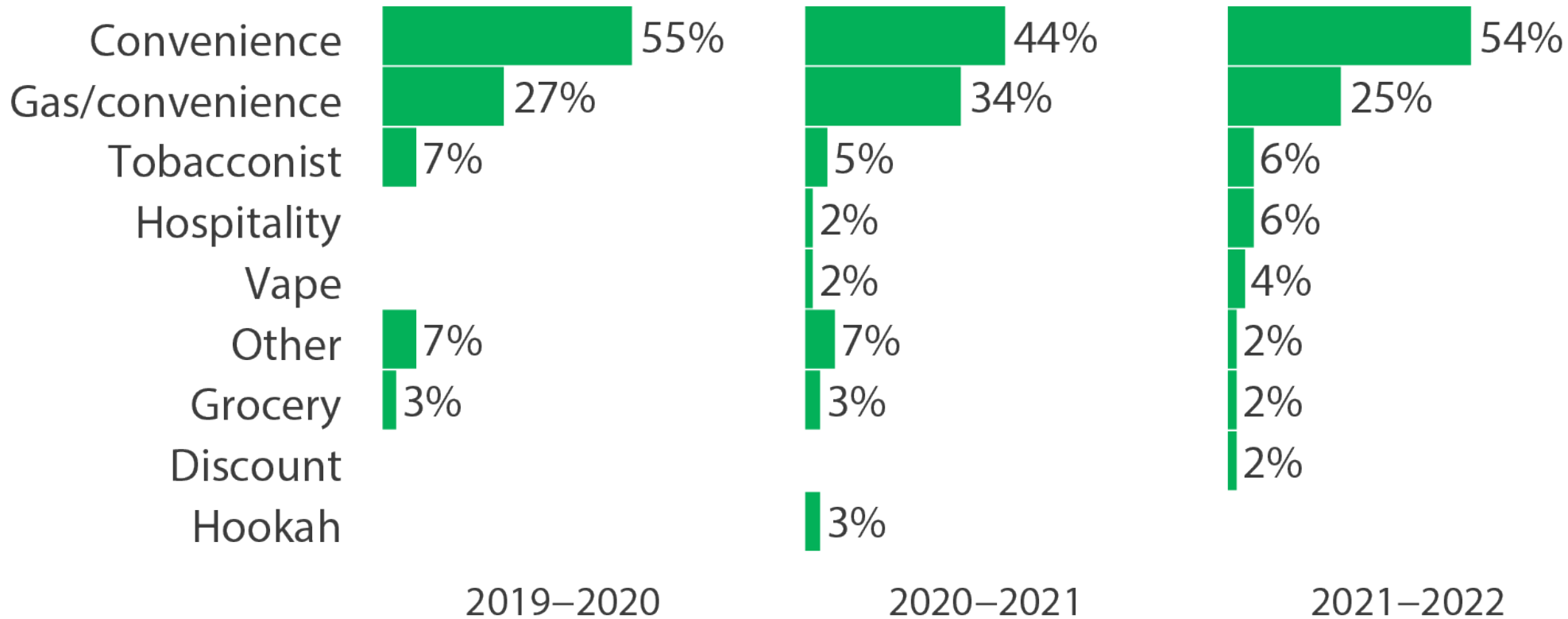
Twelve tobacco retailers interviewed



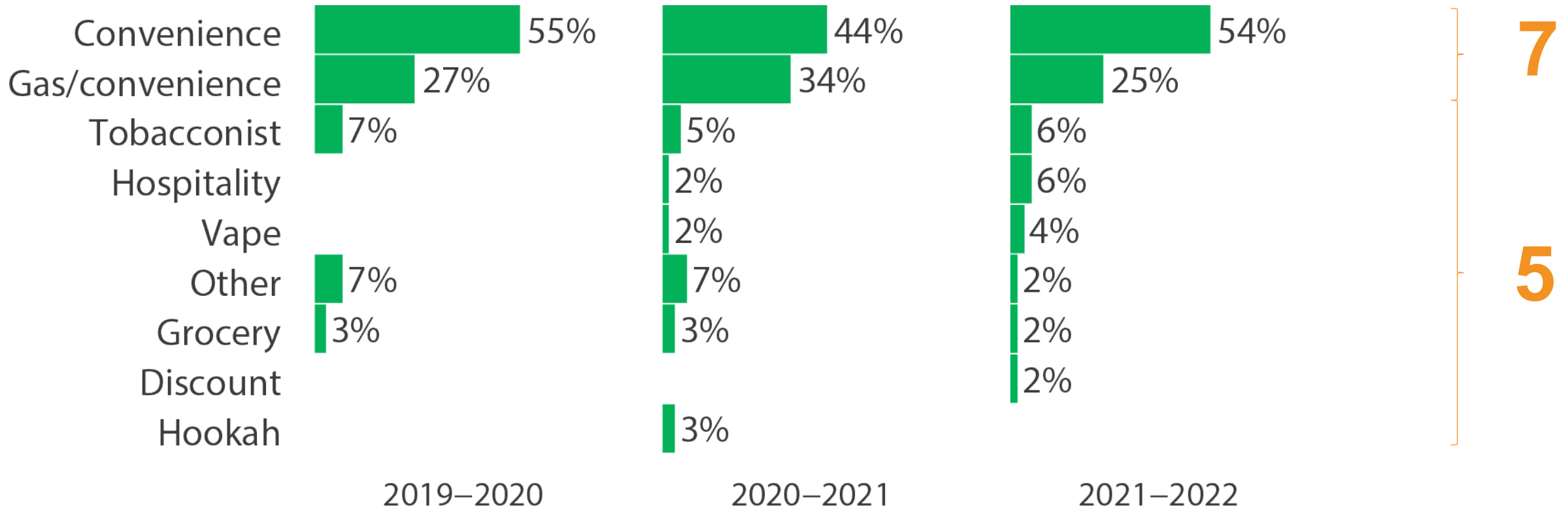
12



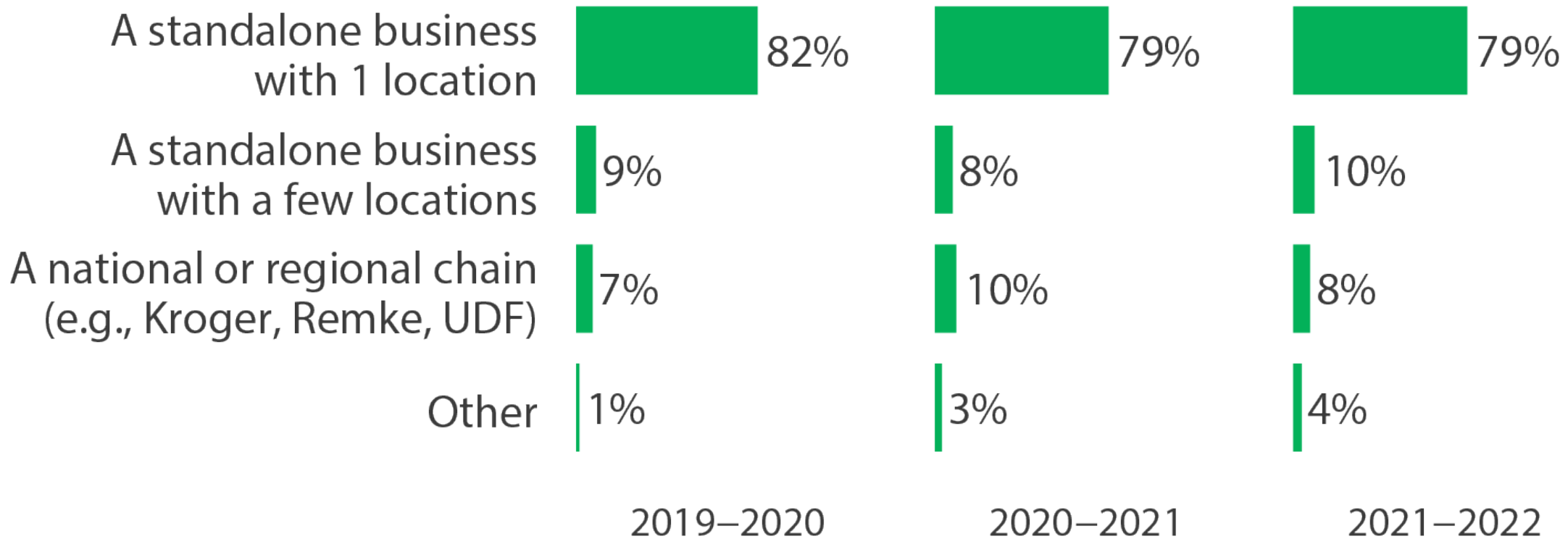
Majority surveyed represented convenience stores with/out gas stations



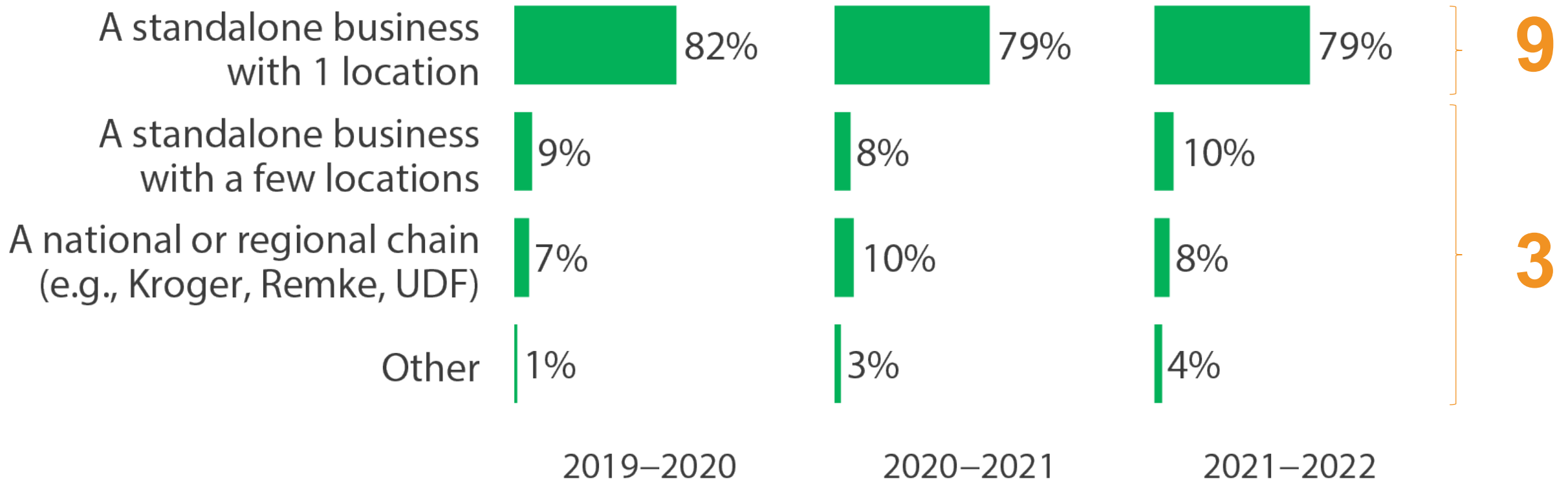
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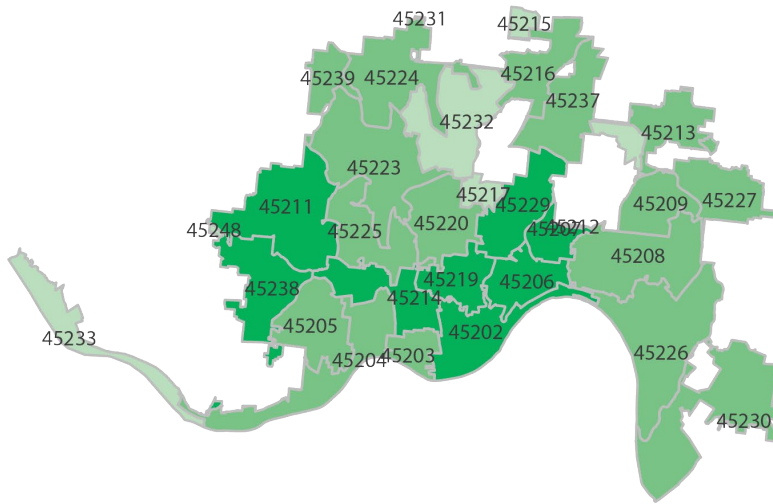
Majority **surveyed** had businesses **with only one location**



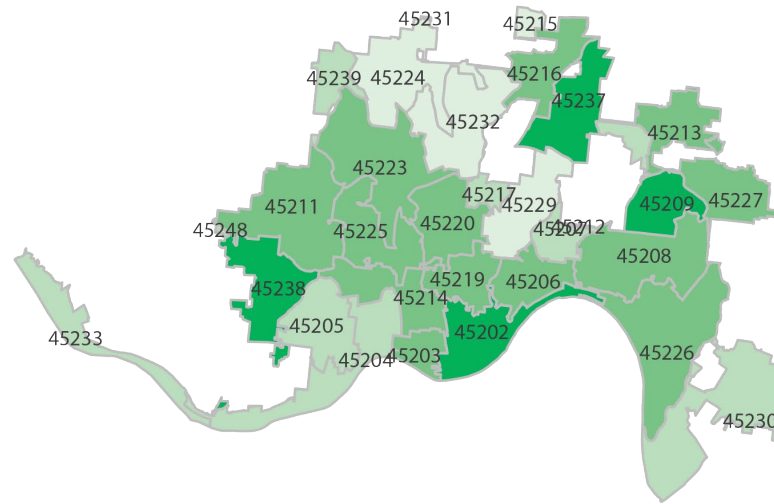
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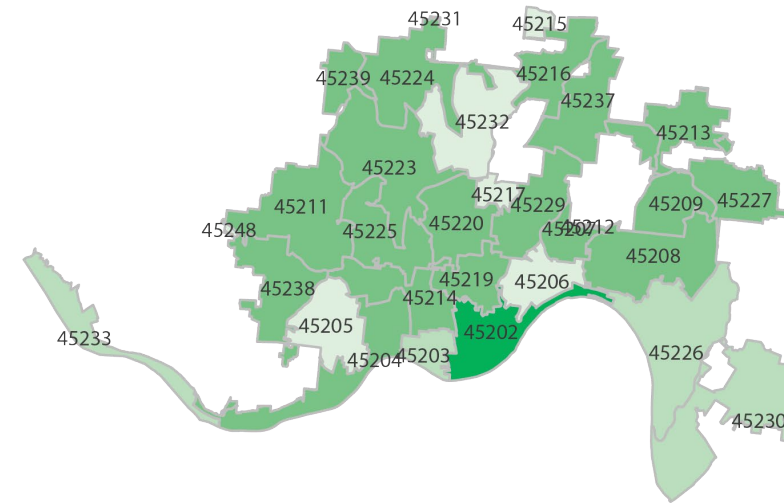
At least 24/31 Cincinnati ZIP codes represented in each survey wave



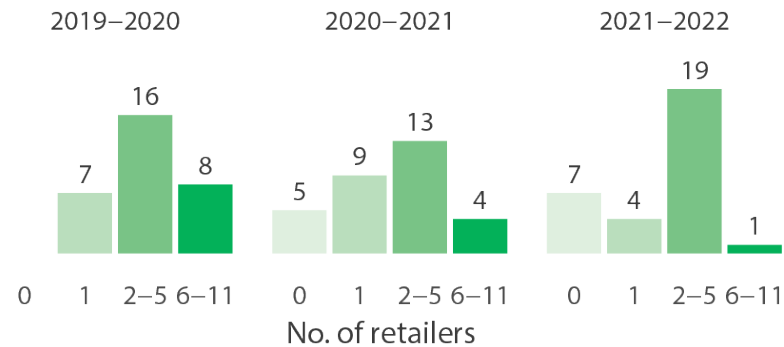
2019–2020



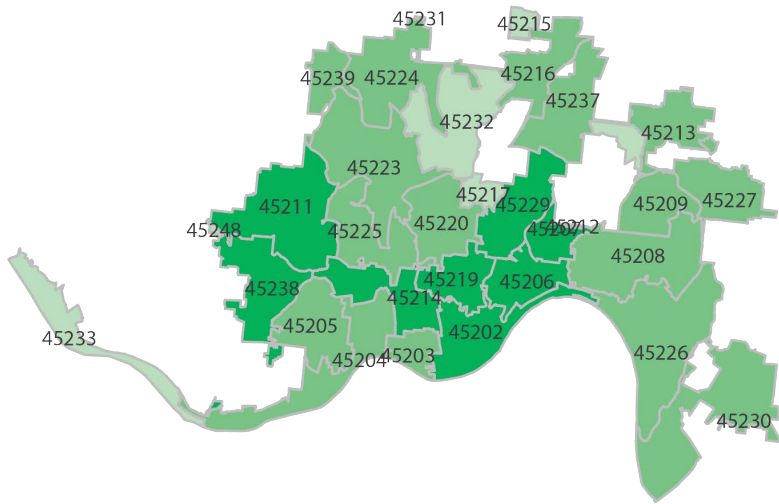
2020–2021



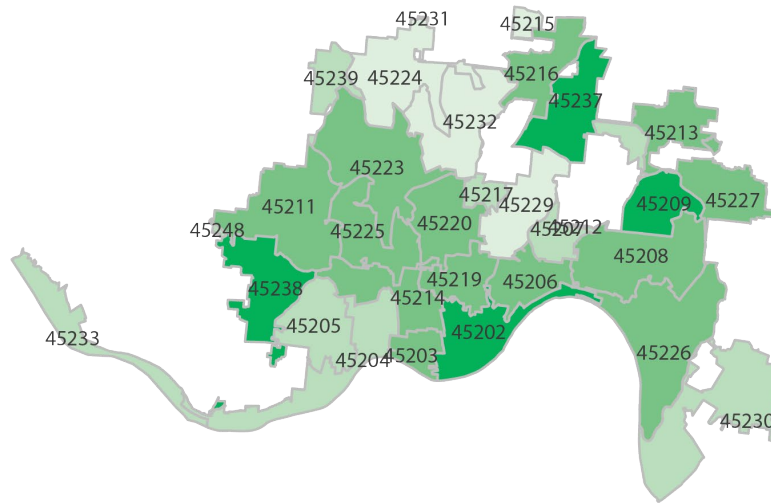
2021–2022



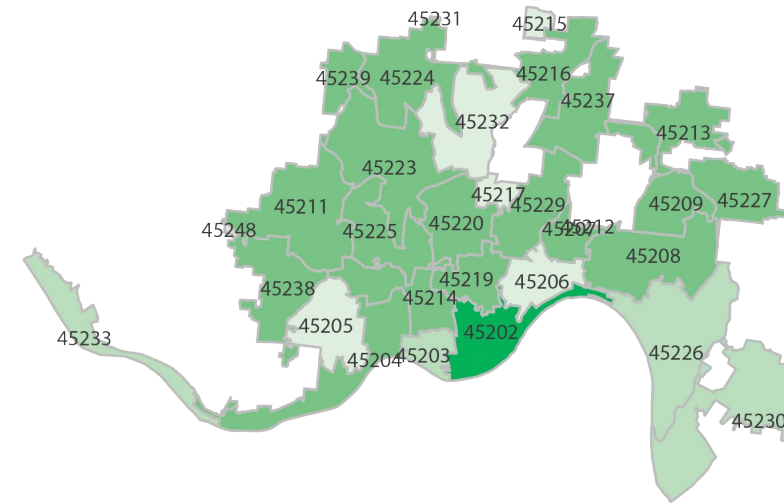
13/31 Cincinnati ZIP codes represented in interviews



2019–2020

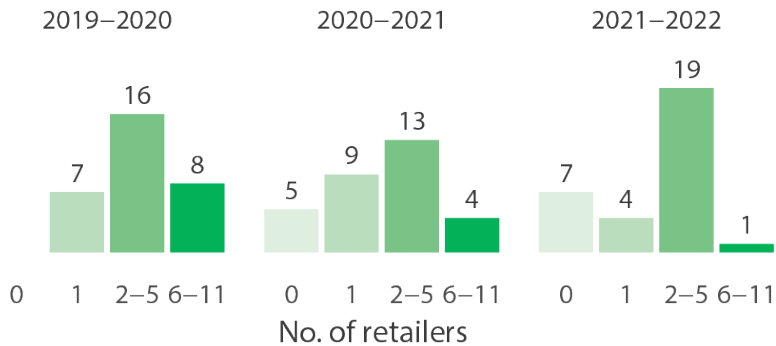


2020–2021



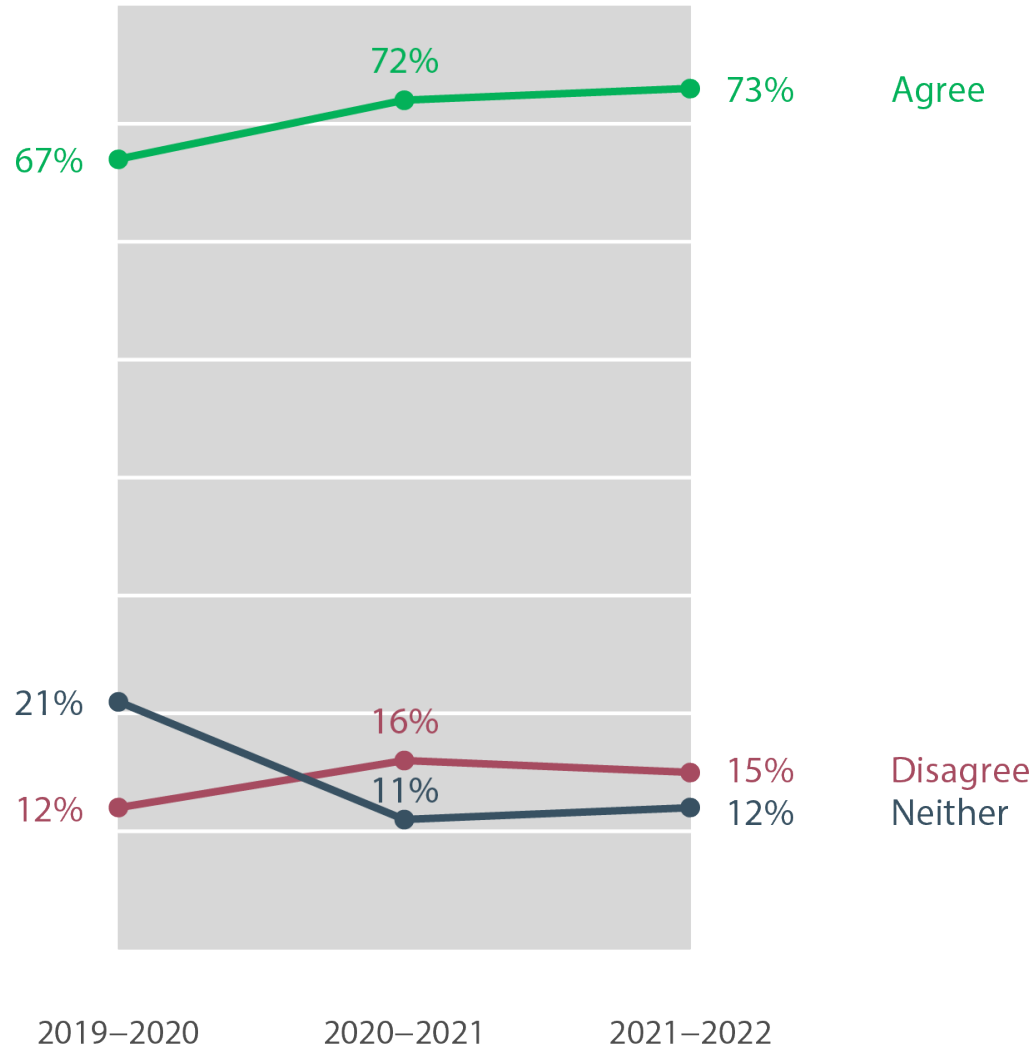
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13

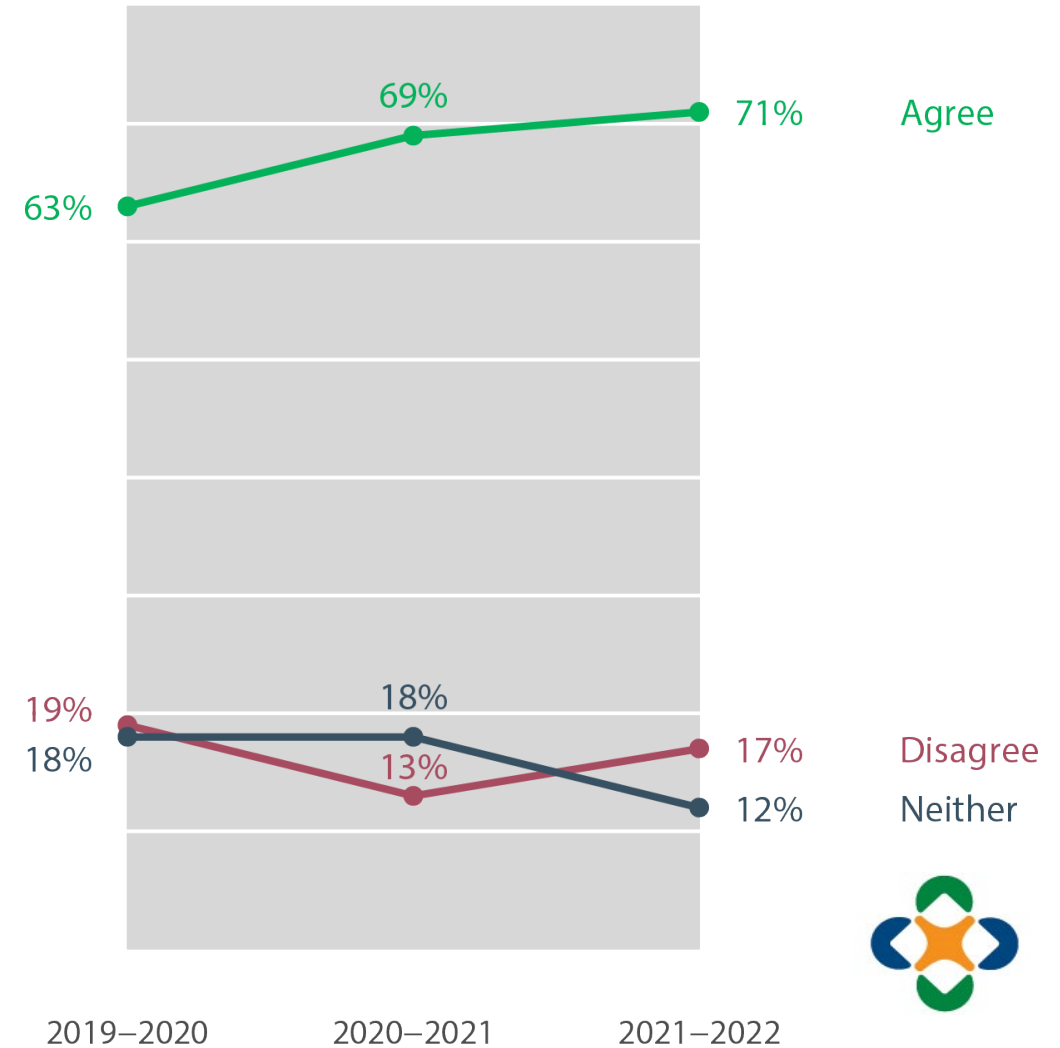


Strong, increasing support by retailers for underlying reasons of Tobacco 21

Majority retailers agree that youth and young adult tobacco use is a **serious issue** and should be addressed

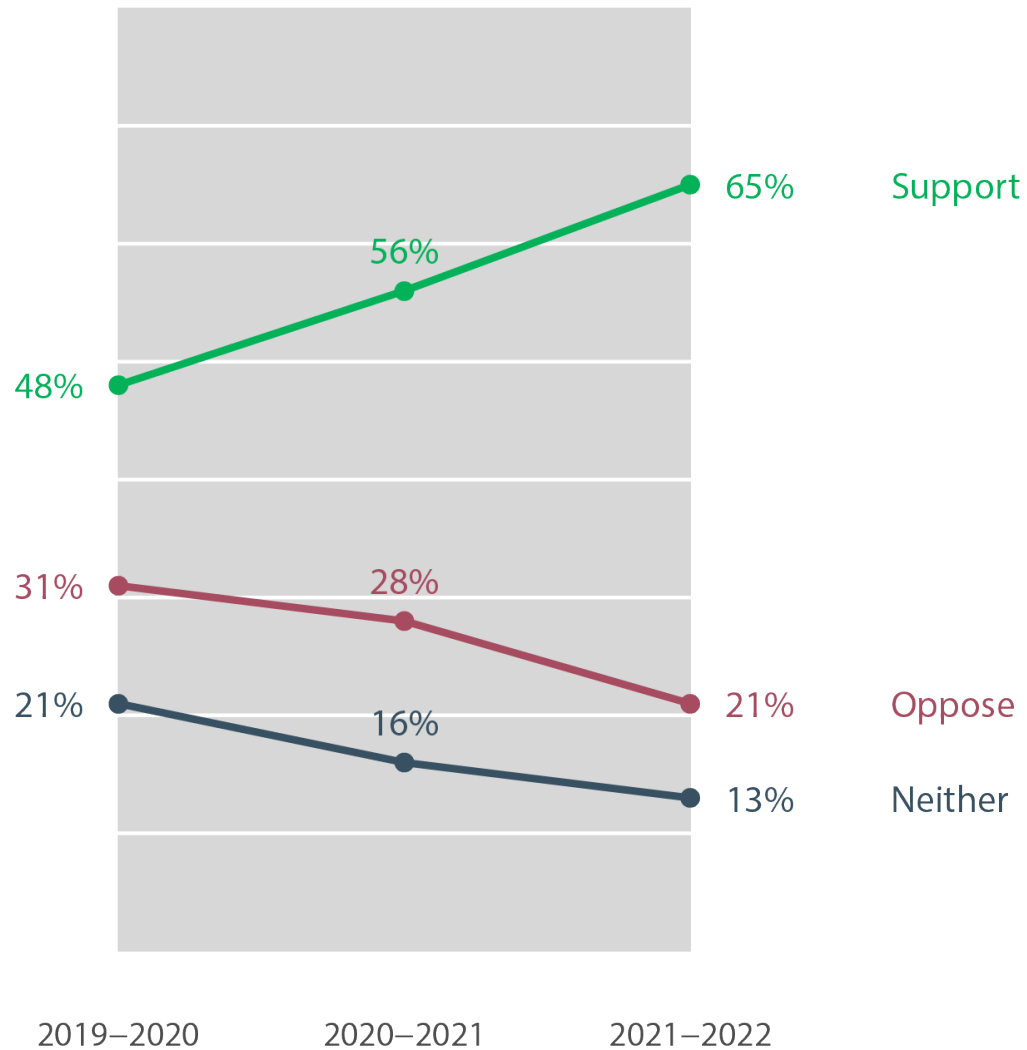


Strong belief that initiation before age 21 leads to **addiction**

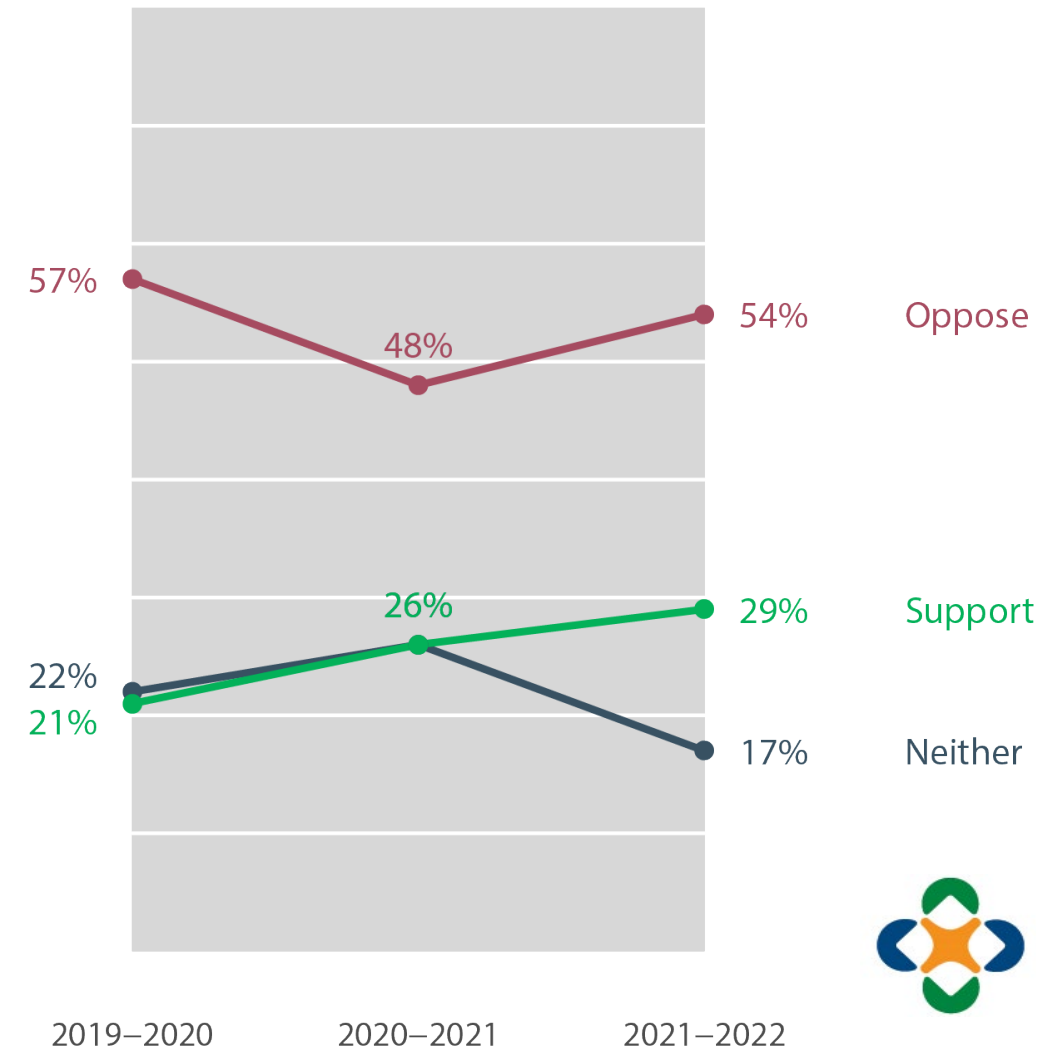


Retailers' support for local policies increase over time

Retailers are more **supportive** of local Tobacco 21...



...than local licensing policy



Retailer **support** for policies can **bolster compliance**

Almost half (5/12) of interviewed retailers identified their own support for Tobacco 21 as a resource for their own compliance with Tobacco 21 and Tobacco Retailer Licensing policies.

*“ I’m **happy to comply, but the fines are far too punitive for small business owners. (2020-2021)** ”*



Retailers **support** policies to **protect youth/young adults**

“ ...for **health** reasons to **young** generation...(2019-2020)

“ ...raising the [minimum legal sales] age to 21 helps **young adults** to make wiser **decisions** on [whether] or not they want to **start smoking**...(2020-21)

“ We do **not** want the **youth** to be **addicted** at a young age (2021-2022)

“ ...**save** our **young** people in our community... (2020-2021)

“ Because I am here with a [lot of] [**young**] people, school area – so I [do] **support** tobacco 21 (2021-2022)



Retailers expressed **concern** that the **fees are too high**

“ *...\$500 is a huge hit and small businesses don't make a lot of money to begin with...(2019-20)*

“ *I'm happy to comply, but the **fin**es are far too **punitive** for small business owners. (2020-2021)*

“ *...tobacco profit margins are small and for smaller businesses it is a major cost... (2020-2021)*

“ *Your **license fee** is more than we make profit in one month from tobacco. (2021-2022)*

“ *I support the age restriction for smoking. But city of Cincinnati charging **\$500... is a scam** (2021-2022)*

“ *Because it strongly affects a lot of small businesses were **\$500 is a big amount of money** to them small businesses are hurting enough and this just adds an additional burden to them I do not believe they should be held responsible for enforcing the laws (2021-2022)*



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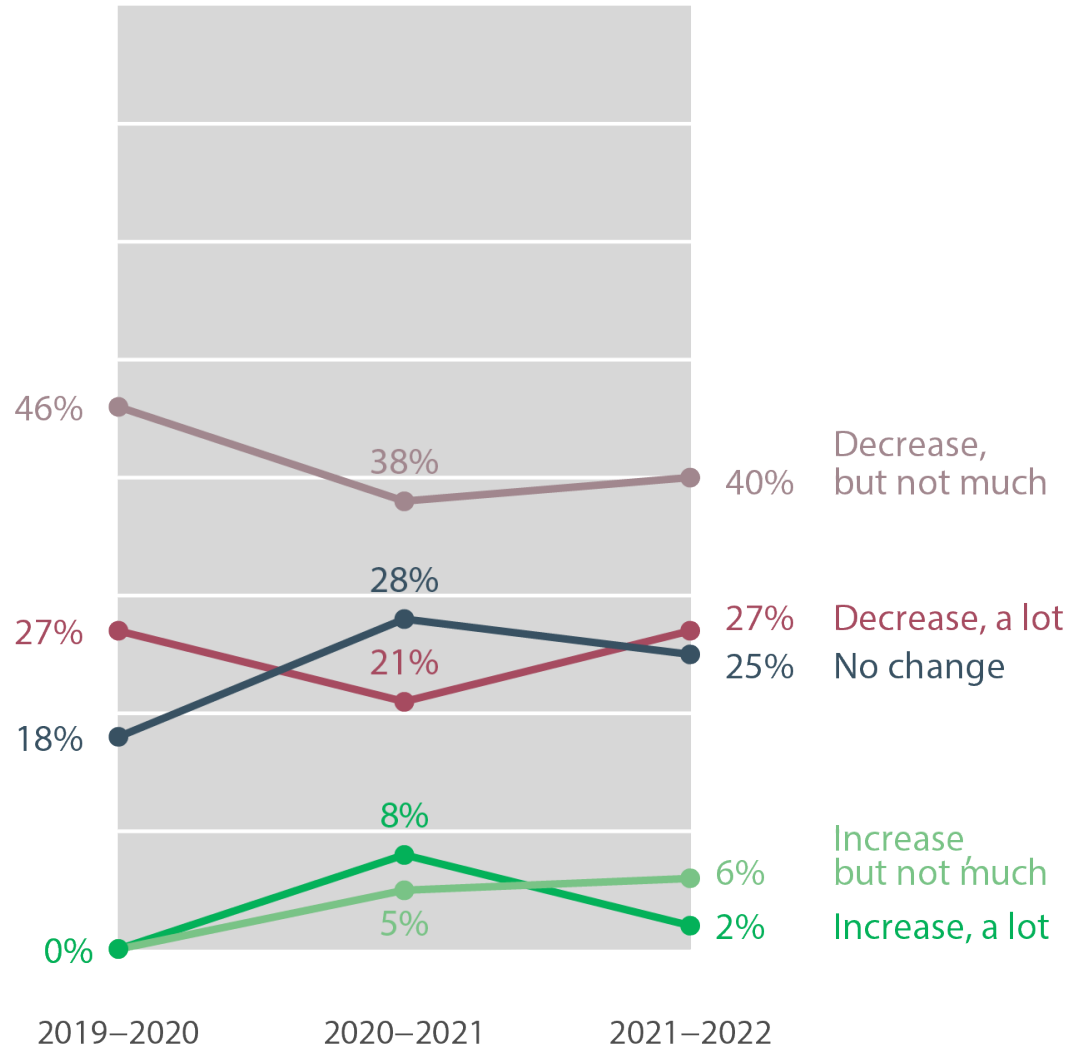
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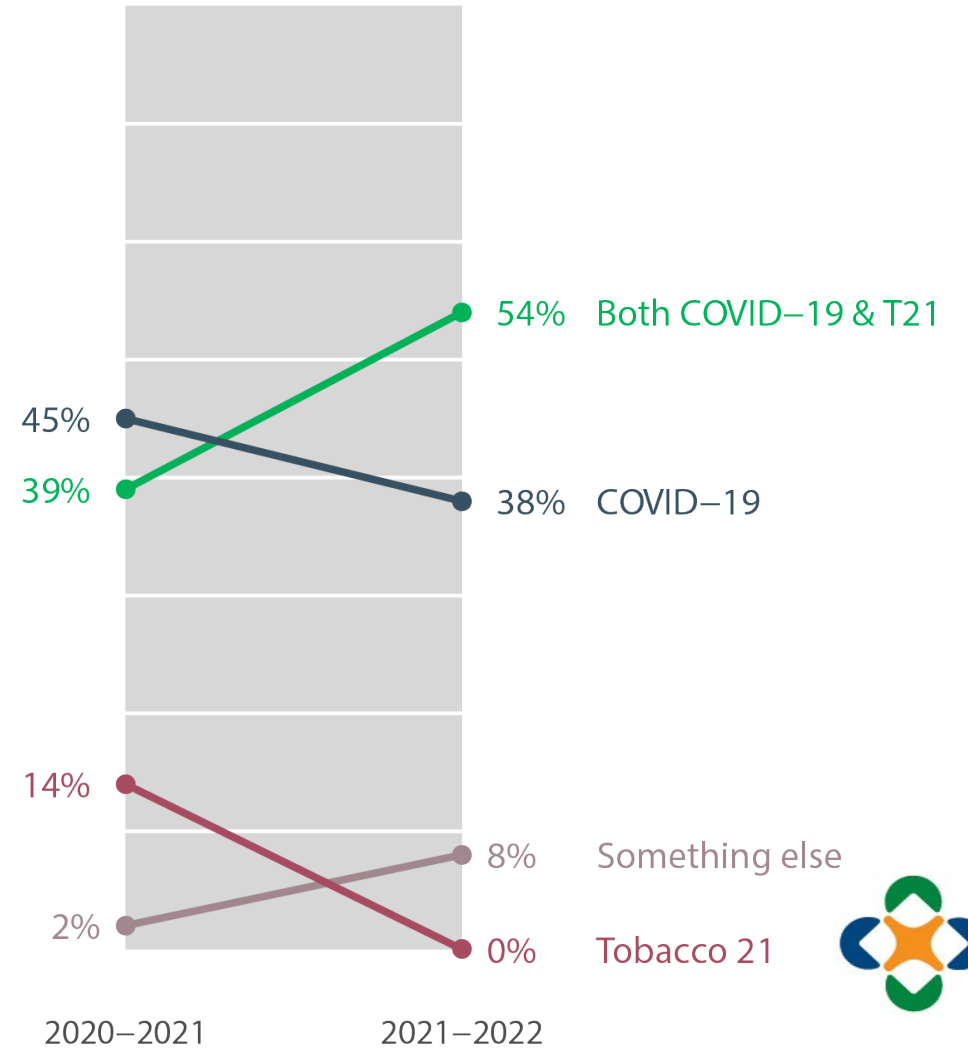


Tobacco 21 did **not** impact retailers' **businesses** as much as they **expected**

Fewer retailers experienced **loss** to sales and profits following Tobacco 21 than they initially expected



COVID-19 influenced changes in sales and profits **more** than Tobacco 21 alone



Mixed opinions on Tobacco 21 impact on business' sales and profits

Half of interviewed retailers reported **no effect** on business from Tobacco 21

Three retailers reported that Tobacco 21 **reduced** their businesses' **tobacco sales**

“ *...would **not affect** our business as we **do not sell much** of any **Tobacco** products (2020-2021)*

“ ***Not really very much** the prices are getting higher for tobacco products and making that a deterrent for people smoking as much (2021-2022)*

“ *sales went **down little**. not worry about that... (2021-2022)*

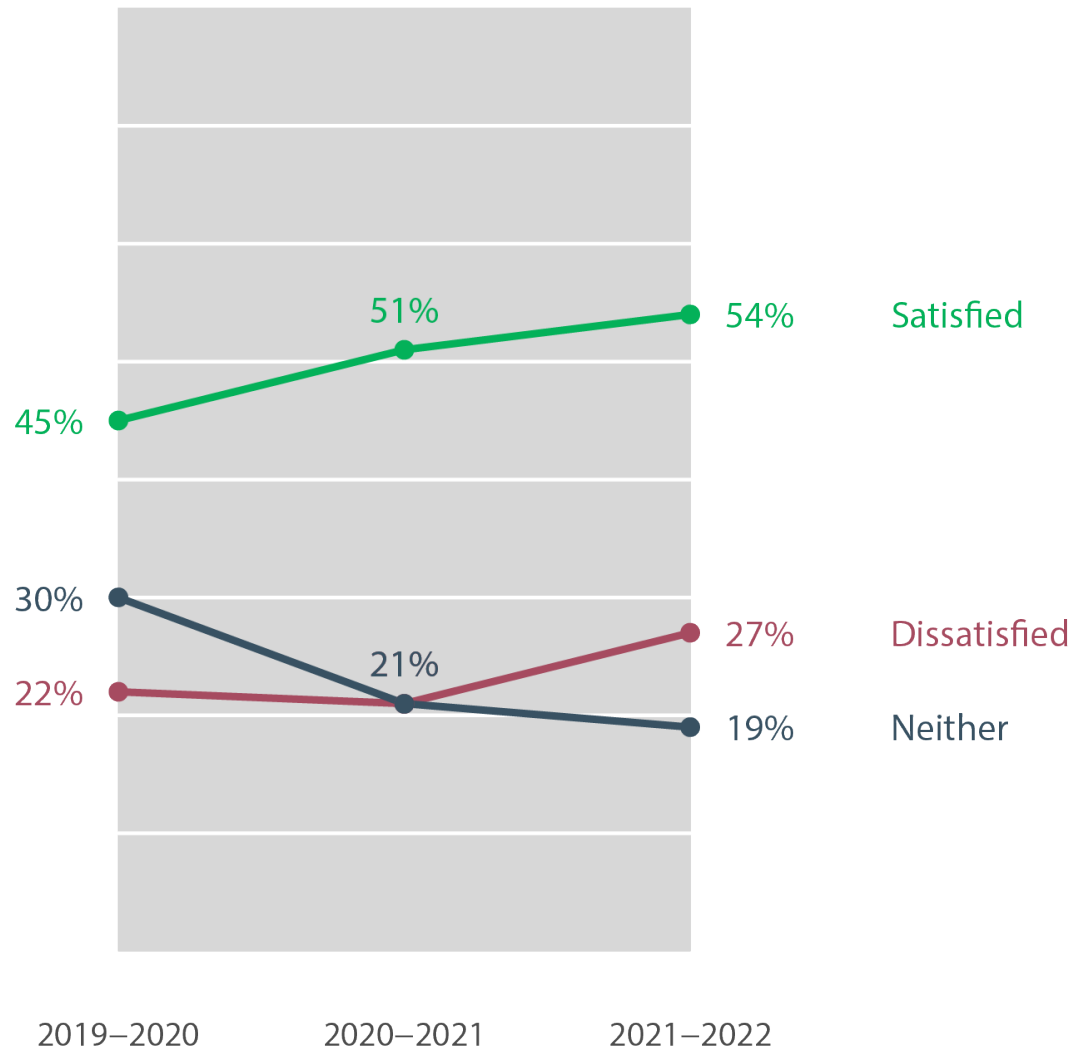
“ ***Decreased** sales overall and definitely profits... (2021-2022)*

“ *Because there were **a lot of people at the age of 18** buying tobacco products. (2021-2022)*



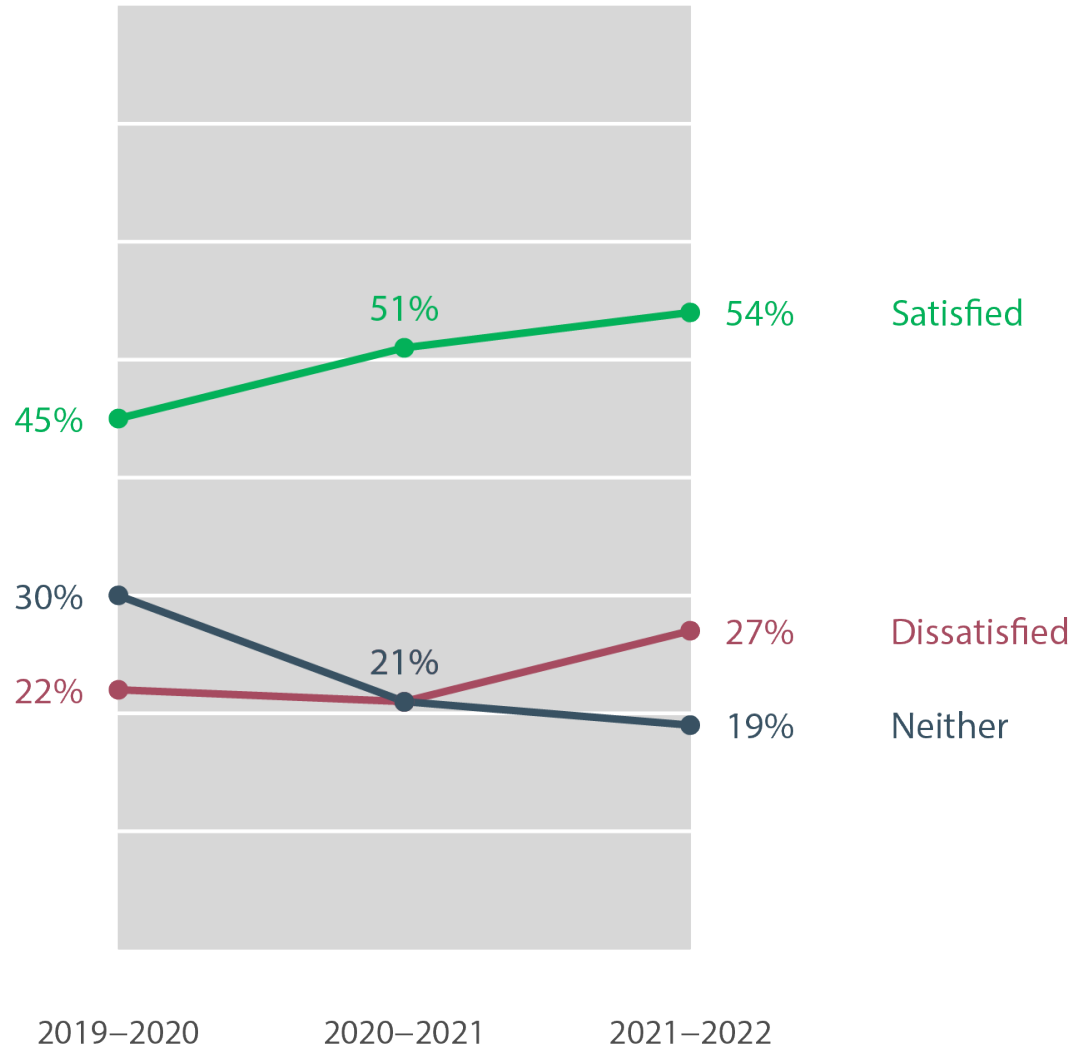
Retailers can **share feedback** to **support** implementation and **enforcement**

Majority retailers are **satisfied** with materials shared by Cincinnati Health Department



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Cincinnati Health Department-provided **signage** has helped most interviewed retailers with **compliance** and **customer education (9/12)**.



Implications



Retailers as **stakeholders** in tobacco control

- Supportive to local implementation and enforcement
- Stakeholder input
- Real-time feedback
- Monitor environment
- Know the community



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City of Cincinnati focus
Not a random sample
CHD invitations/reminders



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- Supportive to local implementation and enforcement
- Stakeholder input
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- Monitor environment
- Know the community
- Foster a relationship

City of Cincinnati focus
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Thank you to:

- Caren Bacon
- Desirae Bartos
- Todd Combs
- Jessica Price
- Kelley Adcock
- Julian Collins
- Megan Folkerth
- William Pointer
- David Roland
- Tonia Smith



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